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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 27 May 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

This week marked the fifth anniversary of Israel's complete withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Israel's total withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000 was in full compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and has been confirmed inter alia by the Secretary-General, by the Security Council in resolutions 1310 (2000) and 1337 (2001), and by the statement of the President of the Security Council of 18 June 2000.

At the outset, Israel would like to note that it views the recent democratic processes occurring within Lebanon, with the support of the international community, as positive developments for the region, for Lebanon, and for all those interested in strengthening its sovereignty and well-being.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, there are still reasons for concern: although Israel is in full and confirmed compliance with resolution 425 (1978), the Lebanese Government has not yet fulfilled its part of the resolution or met its obligations under the norms of international law, which call for the restoration of international peace and security and the implementation of Lebanese authority over all its territory, including the south.

The lack of Lebanese authority in its southern region, including the border area with Israel, has enabled terrorist organizations and militias to act freely. In fact, recent months have seen a surge in the number of cross-border attacks against Israel and an increase in terrorist activity stemming from Lebanon.

Moreover, most recent inflammatory statements made by terrorist leaders operating in Lebanon risk further escalations and could jeopardize the stability of the region as a whole.

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These developments reiterate the pressing need for the immediate disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias operating in Lebanon.

Israel believes that the extension of control of the Government of Lebanon over all of its territory would represent a basic, important step in the furthering of peace and stability in our region and calls upon the international community to help the Government of Lebanon take all the necessary steps towards this end.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 148, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.